# Discussion

# The portrayal of Family in Films of the 1950s and 1980s

The television shows of the 1950s are related to the shows we watch now on TV and can find similarities between them. Traditional family values were invented in the films of 1950s which is also called Nuclear family. Many reasons including Great wars and house shortages compelled people to live in an extended family under the same roof. For example, the 1955 film’ Rebel’, reflects on the family model without any causes and effects. Filmmakers such as Douglas Sirk created family melodrama that involved family conflicts and tensions between generations. Thus, the viewer could easily relate to such films as most of them had the same system of a nuclear family. The revival of the family system can be seen in the 1980s films where the cinematic family flourished again. Due to the political and social culture, the portrayal of family flourished in the films of 1980s. For example, the film ‘Ordinary People' was made to reevaluate the 1950s ideal nuclear family. The films of this era show elements of psychiatry and single-parent households. The definition of gender roles among men portrayed nurtured fathers in films like ‘Kramer Vs Kramer' and ‘Ordinary People'. Due to the inter-generational conflicts that increased divorces and single parents, the idealized 1950s nuclear family concept was brought back to the films of the 1980s.

# Ordinary People Reading

Ordinary People's book, written by Judith Guest's in 1970, tells about the story of a young man and his family as they try to deal with the death of one of the family members. The story starts with the constant struggle of a character Conrad with his identity, because after the loss of his brother, he felt like losing his support system and everyone in the family suffered because of this loss.. The writer shows the aspect of troubled situations the family goes through. It is important to note that a book should not always have to be judged by its cover, likewise a person should not be judged of his or her appearance because no one knows what an individual is going through. Conrad, after a lot of struggle, depression and a suicide attempt, found his identity and let the pain go away with time. The novel alternates back and forth; first it shows the conflicts and then it shows the healing and rebuilding processes of a ruined world. The difficulty of communication is also shown through the marriage of Calvin and Beth. It occurs because they believe that communication based on conflict can ruin a relationship. Later in the novel, it is through communication that Conrad shares what has been troubling him this entire time.

# Ordinary People (Movie, 1980)

This 1980s film which was directed by Robert Redford, became so popular that it won four Academy Awards. This is a very special film that highlights family life, marriage, love, loss growing up and forgiveness. It talks about the experiences, feelings, and fears that are common to us all. One can easily relate to the sufferings and growth of the characters. The film presents a humanistic psychology of a sensitive young man who struggles to come out of the pain caused by his brother’s death. The director went into the depth of family conflicts that arose after the death of one of the characters. One of the most important factors of the film is growth in terms of dealing with troubling situations. It provides ways to deal with such pain and tells people to adjust to the consequences and improve the ability to bear pain caused by loved ones. Each character of this film has been given an opportunity to look upon their motives. Ordinary People is a masterpiece of art and a deeply moving film.